Business Excellence Awards

2371. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Industrial units have bagged "Business Excellence Award" from the International Business Council during 1998;

(b) if so, the names of the States and Union Territories where these industrial units are located;

(c) whether any of such award has been bagged by any Industrial House of Andhra Pradesh;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the instructions to be issued by Government to the State Government to take some steps in this regard;

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (e) The Ministry of Industry is not associated in any manner with the nomination/ selection of industrial units for "Business Excellence Award" 1998.

Transfer of Shares of PSUs to Trusts

2372. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to transfer 51 per cent of the shares of some profitable Public Sector Units to trusts; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) and (b) A number of proposals have been received by the Government including the proposal to set up a National Shareholding Trust as a mode of disinvestment of shares of Public Sector Enterprises. No decision has been taken in this regard.

Socio-economic Impact of Economic Stagnation

2373. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the country have serious apprehensions that economic stagnation will have adverse socio-economic impact;

(b) whether these apprehensions are based on slowed down of foreign capital inflows, the bloated current account deficit coupled with the rupee depreciation and are having negative effect on private investments;

(c) whether Government propose to take some faster measure to remove these apprehensions to strengthen the economic position of the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The FDI inflow (exclusive of GDRs) in January-October, 1998 has been higher at Rs. 11,821 crores as compared to Rs. 10,296 crores in the corresponding period of last year. The inflow to approval ratio has also shown an improvement in this financial year. The current account deficit in 1997-98 at (−) 1.7% of GDP is lower than the figure of (−) 1.8% of GDP in 1995-96 when industrial growth was highest. The exchange rate depreciation of the rupee should also not be a cause of concern as it improves the price competitiveness of exports and reduces import competition for domestic producers of similar goods.

(c) to (e) Several measures have been initiated for arresting the slow down in industrial growth and strengthening the economic position of the country. These include:

(i) delicensing of coal and lignite, petroleum refining and sugar.